

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for managing access to data in a database subject to a plurality of label-based security policies, the method comprising the steps of:
 - receiving, within a database management system, a request for performing an operation set of one or more operations on data in a table of the database;
 - determining which policies, of the plurality of label-based policies, apply to the table based on a policy set of one or more policies associated with the table; and
 - for each operation in the operation set, determining whether to perform the operation on a row of the table based on a set of labels associated with the row, the set of labels corresponding to the policy set.
2. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising adding a policy column to the table for each policy in the policy set associated with the table
3. A method according to Claim 2, further comprising storing a label, of the set of labels associated with the row, in a corresponding policy column of the row.
4. A method according to Claim 2, said step of determining which policies apply further comprising the step of determining whether a column is a policy column.
5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the policy set associated with the table includes two or more policies of the plurality of label-based policies.

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1 11. A method according to Claim 10, said step invoking the administrative routine of the
2 first package further comprising providing to the administrative routine of the first package a
3 plurality of parameters including a policy name for the first policy and a plurality of label
4 names for labels of the first policy.

1 12. A method according to Claim 6, further comprising, in response to attempts to operate
2 on data in a row in the table, the step of determining that the first policy applies to the table.

1 13. A method according to Claim 6, further comprising the steps of:
2 associating a second policy of a second model set in a second package with a second
3 table within the database system; and
4 invoking the access mediation routine in the second package for determining whether
5 to allow operation on data in the second table based on the second policy.

1 14. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the second model in the second package is
2 the same as the first model in the first package.

1 15. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the second model in the second package is
2 different from the first model in the first package.

1 16. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the second table is the same as the first
2 table.

1 17. A method according to Claim 13, wherein the second table is different from the first
2 table.

1 18. A method according to Claim 6, said step of invoking the access mediation routine in
2 the first package further comprising providing data indicating the first policy to the access
3 mediation routine.

1 19. A method according to Claim 6, wherein.
2 the method further comprises the step of determining a set of allowed labels for the
3 first policy for a user of the database management system;
4 said step of invoking the access mediation routine is performed during said step of
5 determining the set of allowed labels; and
6 the user is allowed to operate on the data according to the first policy if the data is
7 associated with a label for the first policy and the label is included the set of
8 allowed labels for the first policy.

1 20. A method according to Claim 19, further comprising the step of storing the set of
2 allowed labels in a session cache for a communication session between the database
3 management system and the user.

1 21. A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for
2 managing access to data in a database subject to a plurality of label-based security policies,
3 wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors
4 causes the one or more processors to perform the steps of:
5 receiving a request for performing an operation set of one or more operations on data
6 in a table of the database;
7 determining which policies, of the plurality of label-based policies, apply to the table
8 based on a policy set of one or more policies associated with the table; and

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9 for each operation in the operation set, determining whether to perform the operation
10 on a row of the table based on a set of labels associated with the row, the set
11 of labels corresponding to the policy set.

1 22. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 21, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the step
3 of adding a policy column to the table for each policy in the policy set associated with the
4 table

1 23. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 22, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the step
3 of storing a label, of the set of labels associated with the row, in a corresponding policy
4 column of the row.

1 24. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 22, said step of determining which
2 policies apply further comprising the step of determining whether a column is a policy
3 column.

1 25. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 21, wherein the policy set
2 associated with the table includes two or more policies of the plurality of label-based policies.

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26. A computer-readable medium carrying one or more sequences of instructions for managing access to data in a database based on a database policy set of one or more label-based security policies, wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions by one or more processors causes the one or more processors to perform the steps of:

registering, with a database management system, one or more package of routines, wherein each package implements a security model that supports a model set of one or more policies of the database policy set and each package includes an access mediation routine;

associating a first policy of a first model set in a first package with a first table within the database system; and

invoking the access mediation routine in the first package for determining whether to allow operation on data in the first table based on the first policy.

27. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 26, wherein the access mediation routine conforms to a specified interface for enforcing a policy in the database management system.

28. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 27, wherein the package includes one or more administrative routines for defining a policy for the model set.

29. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 28, wherein execution of the one or more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the step of defining a name for a particular policy; labels for the particular policy; descriptions for the labels; and properties for the labels.

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1 30. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 26, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the step
3 of invoking an administrative routine of the first package for defining the first policy.

1 31. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 30, said step invoking the
2 administrative routine of the first package further comprising providing to the administrative
3 routine of the first package a plurality of parameters including a policy name for the first
4 policy and a plurality of label names for labels of the first policy.

1 32. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 26, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform, in
3 response to attempts to operate on data in a row in the table, the step of determining that the
4 first policy applies to the table.

1 33. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 26, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the steps
3 of:

4 associating a second policy of a second model set in a second package with a second
5 table within the database system; and
6 invoking the access mediation routine in the second package for determining whether
7 to allow operation on data in the second table based on the second policy.

1 34. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 33, wherein the second model in
2 the second package is the same as the first model in the first package.

1 40. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 39, wherein execution of the one or
2 more sequences of instructions further causes the one or more processors to perform the step
3 of storing the set of allowed labels in a session cache for a communication session between
4 the database management system and the user.

FOOTNOTES